

XXVII.—On the Bower-bird recently described by Mr. C. W. De Vis as *Cnemophilus mariæ*. By P. L. SCLATER, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.S.

(Plate VIII.)

As already recorded in this Journal (above, p. 280), Mr. C. W. De Vis, the Curator of the Queensland Museum, in a report, dated June 30th, 1894, and addressed to the Administrator of British New Guinea, described a collection of birds made by Captain Armit and Mr. Guise during Sir William Macgregor's recent exploration of Mount Maneao. Amongst the new birds characterized on this occasion was what Mr. De Vis considered at the time to be a second species of his lately instituted genus *Cnemophilus*, which was dedicated to Lady Macgregor as *Cnemophilus mariæ*. Of this species a male had been obtained on Mount Maneao in the month of April at an elevation of 5650 feet, and a young male and five females at 5000 feet. In his report Mr. De Vis described *Cnemophilus mariæ* as follows:—

“*Male*. Wholly black; upper surface of wings and tail with a brilliant blue sheen, remainder of body-plumage velvet-black (duller on rump and abdomen) with a fainter sheen; post-nasal plumes flat, squamate, highly iridescent, forming a nasal shield, meeting its fellow of the opposite side in a slight ridge over base of culmen; under surface of wing and tail deep fuscous; legs dark brown; bill black. Length 185 mm., culmen exposed 13, wing 96, tail 76, tarsus 38.

“*Female*. Upper surface olive-green; edges of feathers brown, forming transverse bars on the neck and back, and more or less distinctly on the head; lower back, rump, and upper tail-coverts with few or no bars; lower surface yellower, especially on abdomen; feathers from chin to upper breast brown-edged; wing fuscous; outer edges of quills rufous; wing beneath brown, inner webs pale rufous from base of first primary to near the tips of the secondaries; under wing-coverts pale yellowish buff; tail rufous brown, washed with olive; under surface fuscous brown; legs brownish black;

bill black. Length 190, wing 97, tail 95, culmen exposed 15, tarsus 37."

Mr. De Vis, at my request, has now most kindly sent to the Editors of this Journal for illustration specimens of both sexes of this most interesting bird, and it will be found figured in the accompanying plate (Plate VIII.) by Mr. Keulemans. I propose to add a few remarks on it.

On showing the specimens to Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe, whose knowledge of the Paradise-birds and Bower-birds is unrivalled, he immediately suggested that the female was the same as *Loria loriæ*, lately described by Count Salvadori in the 'Annals' of the Museo Civico of Genoa (ser. 2, vol. xiv., May, 1894).

Count Salvadori having most kindly forwarded the typical specimen of his species to London for comparison, I find that Dr. Sharpe was correct, or very nearly so, in his identification; yet, as the females in this group of birds are often extremely similar, while the males are specifically different, I think it would be dangerous to assume that *Cnemophilus mariæ* is absolutely identical with *Loria loriæ*. Although the plumage of the two specimens before me is closely alike and the dimensions are nearly the same, I observe that the bill in *Loria loriæ* is rather narrower, and that in *Cnemophilus mariæ* there are no—or at any rate very slight—indications of the wattle at the angle of the mouth, which, as Count Salvadori has pointed out, is a noticeable feature in *Loria loriæ*. It is therefore, I think, quite possible that these two birds may belong to two different but closely allied species, although there can be no doubt that they appertain to the same genus. Under these circumstances I have thought it right to adopt *Loria* as the correct generic name of this new form, while I retain Mr. De Vis's specific term *mariæ*. In my opinion *Loria naria* should be referred to the Bower-birds (*Ptilonorhynchidæ*), as evidenced by the general structure and the character of the female plumage, although the erect velvety plumes and metallic colouring of the frontal feathers in the male show indications of relationship to the Paradise-birds.



J. G. Keulemans del et lith.

Nintern Bros. imp

LORIA MARLE, ♂ et ♀.